

VINEYARD

revealing the relationship between Americans and their land

AN OCCASIONAL RECORD OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE HISTORIC LANDSCAPE INITIATIVE

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Making Educated Decisions— Goes On-Line

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The National Park Service Historic Landscape Initiative is pleased to announce the 'Live' edition of Making Educated Decisions: A Landscape Preservation Bibliography (*MEDs*). With a surge in related publications and a commitment to providing timely updates, the Historic Landscape Initiative has expanded its *MEDs* database to a free online format located on the Internet at <<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/hli/meds/>>.

Perhaps the most exciting element of the new annotated bibliography is its interactive format, which allows users to customize their search using the built-in database search engine. Within seconds, the user can search the *MEDs* database to locate resources on general subjects, such as "battlefield landscapes"

and technical topics, such as "embedded aggregate treatment for pavements."

The guided menus assist users at all levels, providing both simple as well as advanced search options with as many as eight fields of selection criteria. Beyond the customary author, subject, geographic location and title index categories, a new feature of the web-based format is the keyword search, facilitating the location of terms within the abstract as well as the article citation. These enhanced search options provide quicker collection of resources, allowing the user to create personalized research lists and import bibliographic information directly into the user's documents.

Today more than ever, professionals undertaking project work in landscape architecture, historic preservation, archaeology, planning, geography, landscape management, maintenance and cultural landscape studies

have numerous resources for information. The *MEDs* collection is an annotated bibliography to

assist the user in making informed decisions when researching, planning, managing, interpreting, and undertaking cultural landscape project work, targeting scholarly-level publications that go a step beyond the issues by enhancing detailed research with critical analysis. An example of publications that have historically contributed a large percentage of articles include *George Wright Forum*, *Cultural Resource Management (CRM)*, and *APT Bulletin*. Thanks to a heightened focus on issues surrounding the treatment and management of cultural landscapes, several new publications have been added to our list research agenda including *Planning* magazine and the *Journal of the American Planning Association*.

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*Picnicking at Christmas Lake, c. 1940, see related article, page 9.
Courtesy Mn/DOT.*



Save the Dates! April 5-6, 2002

Preserving Modern Landscape Architecture II, the follow-up to the 1995 Conference held at Wave Hill (which became a 1999 Spacemaker Press publication bearing the same title) will be held on Friday, April 5 and Saturday April 6, 2002. The conference will be co-sponsored by the National Park Service Historic Landscape Initiative, The CATALOG of Landscape Records in the United States at Wave Hill, The New York Landmarks Conservancy and the Cultural Landscape Foundation. Speakers will be international in scope and will include leaders in historic preservation, landscape architecture, architecture and landscape history.

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Mission of the National Park Service

The National Park Service is dedicated to conserving unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The Service is also responsible for managing a great variety of national and international programs designed to help extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.



HPS
Heritage
Preservation
Services

Welcome to **VINEYARD**

The Historic Landscape Initiative (HLI) is pleased to present this edition of *Vineyard*. With this fifth issue, we truly celebrate our partnership initiatives with our state partners (Minnesota Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, Minnesota Department of Transportation, Kentucky Heritage Council) and regional stewards (Pittsburgh History and Landmarks, North Side Leadership Council, New York City Landmarks Commission, Wave Hill, University of Minnesota, University of Kentucky Landscape Architecture Department).

This edition also highlights two national conferences that the Historic Landscape Initiative is co-sponsoring in 2002: Preserving Modern Landscape Architecture II (for details see cover of this issue) and Preserving and Managing Historic Campus and University Grounds (see call for papers, page 15.)

We are also pleased to announce that the Historic Landscape Initiative, along with our project partners—the Library of American Landscape History, the Catalog of Landscape Records in the United States at Wave Hill and the Cultural Landscape Foundation—were the recipients of a Merit Award in Communications from the American Society of Landscape Architects for our collaborative effort, *Pioneers of American Landscape Design*. In the November issue of *Landscape Architecture* magazine the jury noted that “*Pioneers* is providing the spark for better informed historic preservation.”

The *Pioneers* and HLI share a common goal for better informed historic preservation work, as illustrated by the projects featured in this *Vineyard*. From appropriate treatment recommendations for our Main Streets and streetscapes to documentation and evaluation strategies for our historic roads, the HLI chronicles and presents recent pioneering efforts in this final issue of 2001. The project partners at a state, local and university level are all to be applauded for these groundbreaking undertakings which will surely inspire other national efforts.

Finally, note that all editions of *Vineyard* along with the *Making Educated Decisions* database are available on line at www2.cr.nps.gov/hli.

Charles A. Birnbaum, FASLA
Coordinator, Historic Landscape Initiative

Mission of the Historic Landscape Initiative

The Historic Landscape Initiative develops preservation planning tools that respect and reveal the relationship between Americans and their land.

The Initiative provides essential guidance to accomplish sound preservation practice on a variety of landscapes, from parks and gardens to rural villages and agricultural landscapes.

The Historic Landscape Initiative is committed to ongoing preservation of cultural landscapes that can yield an improved quality of life for all, a sense of place, and identity for future generations.

Making Educated Decisions-- Goes On-Line

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Continuing in the tradition of the previous two editions, *Making Educated Decisions: A Landscape Preservation Bibliography* reflects the National Park Service mission to promote, "a wise use of our land, (and) preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historic places."

If you have an article for inclusion in this database, please forward a copy to *MEDs* Coordinator, Historic Landscape Initiative (NC 320), National Park Service, 1849 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20240.

Save the Date!

continued from cover

The first day of the two day conference will be held at Wave Hill in the Bronx, New York and will aim to explore recent innovations and advancements in the United States, Canada, Great Britain and Portugal regarding the planning, management and interpretation of post-war masterworks of landscape architecture. Day two, will be held in Manhattan and will aim to establish a historic context for dealing with this heritage and increase public support and appreciation. These papers will highlight the shapers of these often "invisible" landscapes by such masters as Hideo Sasaki, Robert Zion and M. Paul Friedberg. Speakers will include historians Marc Trieb and Richard Longstreth along with landscape architects M. Paul Friedberg, Stuart Dawson, Grant Jones and Laurie Olin among others.

If you received this *Vineyard* publication you will receive the conference mailing at the beginning of next year. In the interim, for immediate information contact the CATALOG at Wave Hill at 718.549.3200.

Cover image: The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden at the Museum of Modern Art. Postcard image courtesy Charles Birnbaum.

Right image: The Lake District of Minneapolis. Lake of the Isles, foreground; Lake Calhoun, center; Lake Harriet, in the distance. Image from the book, "Minneapolis Park System 1883-1944," by Theodore Wirth.

An Innovative and Evolving Partnership

Dennis Gimmestad
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Much of the work of a State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) involves the review of work on historic properties—work proposed by agencies, reviewed through the Section 106 process; by developers, reviewed through tax act applications; by non-profits and cities, reviewed through grant proposals; and by a wide variety of constituents simply seeking technical advice on proper preservation practices.

In each review case, the primary focus usually centers on the project specifics and the drawings on the table, with the goal of achieving compliance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*. A broader view also recognizes that each review case presents an opportunity for collaboration with others that may have a great deal of influence on many other historic properties in the future. So, in addition to resolving the design issues of a particular project proposal, the SHPO can often foster connections with expert technical resources that may engender good preservation work for years to come.

Over the past year, the Minnesota SHPO (MnSHPO) has taken this approach in addressing historic landscape issues in several review cases. Working with the Historic Landscape Initiative (HLI) at the National Park Service, several working sessions, on-site tours, public lectures and discussions have addressed landscape concerns at a variety of historic properties.



Tentative Study Plan for West Section of a Metropolitan Park System for the Twin Cities, 1935. Image from the book, "Minneapolis Park System 1883-1944," by Theodore Wirth.

The collaboration arose from a series of Section 106 reviews with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) for permits related to work in areas of the Minneapolis Park System. Linked by a network of parkways—the "Grand Rounds"—conceived by pioneer landscape gardener H.W.S. Cleveland (1814-1900), this park system had not been evaluated for National Register eligibility until a COE permit application for a water quality project proposed to convert a meadow area to

a wetland. The Grand Rounds system as a whole was deemed eligible for listing. However, the landscape changes brought about by the initial projects introduced significant alteration of key features that adversely affected the historic character of segments of the system.

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An Innovative and Evolving Partnership

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Mitigation measures were adopted, but avoidance of the adverse effects was not achieved.

A proposed project for the park at Lake of the Isles, however, brought new energy to the discussion. Areas of the historic designed landscape which had sunk since being filled in the early 20th century, and which had been subject to severe flooding in recent years, needed restoration. Local wetland regulators called for mitigating the loss of the flooded areas by creating new wetland areas within other portions of the historic landscape. Other changes, such as alterations of the vegetation at the water's edge, and reconfiguration of the path system, were proposed as well.

The plan met with a wide variety of responses from neighborhood residents. Many felt that, even though the purported purpose of the project was to restore the park, the end result would be further erosion of its historic character. Others were just anxious for some remedy to the tiresome flooded conditions.

The historical consultant for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board



(MPRB), Charlene Roise of Hess, Roise and Company, saw the need for a more cogent discussion of historic landscape values of the parkway, and proposed a collaboration with the HLI to the MPRB and the MnSHPO. To date, a series of working sessions and field tours with MPRB staff, and a public lecture and discussion by the HLI Coordinator, have helped to clarify and define the crucial historic landscape issues. Still to be resolved are the conflicts between the need for preservation of these elements and the wetland mitigation requirements of the local watershed district.

Recognizing the broader implications of this discussion, the HLI-MnSHPO collaboration has also included discussions with the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, which is currently working on rules revisions for the state Wetland Conservation Act. Building on one of the Board's planning principles that wetlands need to be addressed "as one resource issue among many", initial discussions involving HLI have introduced the concepts and issues of historic landscapes to agency staff responsible for administering wetland regulations.

Although the issues at Lake of the Isles sparked HLI involvement in Minnesota projects, the collaboration quickly expanded. Other consultations have included the following nationally significant landscapes - both designed and vernacular where project work is currently underway. These include:

Perimeter of Lake of the Isles represents 100 years of landscape architecture, including 1970s-era furnishings by Garrett Eckbo.

Photo Charles Birnbaum.

■ The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board have responsibility for a portion of the Ft. Snelling Historic District (a National Historic Landmark) that is used for recreational purposes. A central historic landscape in this district was the expansive parade grounds, focused on the Fort's clock tower building and flagpole. The landscape of these parade grounds was largely destroyed by the expansion of the fort's golf course in the mid-20th century. Today, as part of mitigation for an adjacent new development, the agencies have agreed to consider reintroducing major elements of this important space, either by moving or redesigning that portion of the golf course. The collaboration has involved discussions with the consulting golf course designer and others on how to interpret and apply the *Secretary of the Interior's Standard's for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* within this context.

■ The Minnesota Department of Transportation has completed a comprehensive survey and evaluation of its historic roadside developments, many dating from the depression period (For a related article, see the Survey feature: Minnesota Department of Transportation Evaluates Roadside



The Midtown Greenway trail system before and after landscape rehabilitation.

Photo Charles Birnbaum.

Development Structures, pages 9-11). The Department is now faced with prioritizing preservation needs and formulating treatment plans. Here, the treatment and management challenges are particularly complex. This is due to the fact that, often, a wayside's landscape features (walls, overlooks, stairs, picnic tables), while distinctive, may be essentially meaningless without equal attention paid to the setting and surrounds including the viewshed and visual relationships that gave rise to the wayside in the first place. The collaboration has focused on the evaluation of integrity and significance, understanding design intent, treatment, and management issues. Technical issues addressed as an integral part of this discussion include vegetation management, protection and stabilization of built features, and viewshed management at several wayside areas included in current highway projects.

■ The University of Minnesota's recent historic preservation plan devotes considerable attention to the landscape history of its campuses. The Northrup Mall (photo below), conceived as part of Cass Gilbert's plan, with landscape architecture by Morrell and Nichols (a partnership began in 1909) today still forms the core of the Minneapolis campus. Rehabilitation of several of the buildings lining the mall are currently underway or

planned; the landscape space between the buildings also needs consideration. The collaboration, along with the University of Minnesota and the Frederick R. Wiseman Museum has resulted in plans for a conference on landscape planning issues, with a special emphasis on the history and planning needs for this central campus space. (For a related conference announcement and the call for papers, see page 15).

■ Hennepin Community Works, an agency of Hennepin County, is spearheading development of the Midtown Greenway trail system along a rail corridor through south Minneapolis. The western end of corridor encompasses the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Grade Separation Project, a historically significant urban planning effort from 1912-1916, designed to provide a grade-separated transportation system within the city's expanding grid. A wide variety of recreational, transportation, neighborhood, arts, and urban design groups and agencies are stakeholders in the greenway project. The collaboration has worked at identifying essential character-defining features of this industrial corridor, with an eye toward the question of whether this character can be preserved while still meeting the broad range of needs of the various constituents.

■ A Minneapolis citizens group has recently begun to work for greater recognition of the historical importance of the Parks Superintendent's Residence, built by the Park Board for Superintendent Theodore Wirth in 1910. Wirth served as superintendent from 1906 to 1935, and oversaw landscape design



Thomas Wirth, Superintendent Emeritus, Minneapolis Park System, c. 1935. Image from the book, "Minneapolis Park System 1883-1944," by Theodore Wirth.

work for the parks in a workroom in the lower level of the house. Theodore's son Conrad played a key role in the administration of the Civilian Conservation Corps and served as the Director of the National Park Service from 1951 to 1963, when Mission 66 was implemented. Building on the recent initiation of a National Register nomination for the house, the collaboration has included initial discussions about how public education on the park system's history and landscape can best utilize the house and its particular story. Wirth's grandson, Theodore, a former president of the American Society of Landscape Architects was also present for this discussion.

Historic landscape planning, treatment and management issues prevail at a majority of Wisconsin's historic properties, either as a property's central element or as its physical context. The collaboration begun by the HLI and the MnSHPO is working both to resolve the historic landscape issues of current projects, and to build knowledge and capability for better approaches to historic landscape treatment in the future.

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View from the Mall at the University of Minnesota, campus landscape architectural design by Morrell and Nichols. Courtesy Charles Birnbaum.



Bringing Back a Nationally Significant City Park

Barry Hannegan, Ph.D.
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Pittsburgh History and Landmarks
Foundation

The Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation (PH&LF) was founded in 1964 as a non-profit historic preservation group serving Allegheny County. PH&LF is dedicated to identifying and preserving the architectural landmarks, historic neighborhoods, and historic designed landscapes of Allegheny County and educating people about this region's architectural heritage and urban landscape design history. The foundation has a long history of working with the National Park Service's Historic Landscape Initiative. In 1994, PH&LF created the position of consulting director for their Parks & Garden Survey. Since then, the HLI Coordinator has been working with consulting director, Barry Hannegan, now Director for Historic Design Programs, on several lectures and publications, such as *Pioneers of American Landscape Design*. *Pioneers* includes Pittsburgh pioneers: Ralph Griswold, Ezra



*View of bathers in
Lake Elizabeth,
pre-1912.
Courtesy the Archives
of Industrial Society,
Hillman Library.*

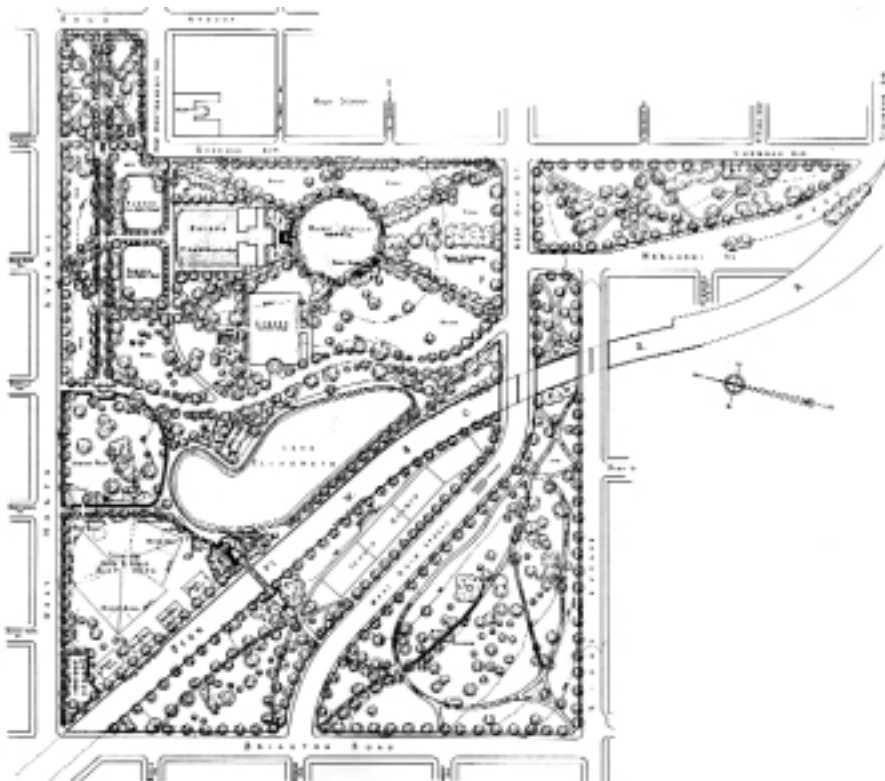
Clark Stiles and Margaret Winters. This effort is a model undertaking for a regional organization and the HLI is grateful that PH&LF has served as a catalyst for the regional/federal partnerships which have grown from this collaboration.

Allegheny Commons: Background

In 1907 Pittsburgh forcibly annexed the city of Allegheny, lying to the north just across the Allegheny River. The city acquired one of the oldest parks west of the Appalachian divide. That park occupied the space that had been set aside as a common when the community was set out in 1784-85. The original plan called for a square, six blocks on each side, with the central four blocks left free for civic development. Around the nucleus of the grid plan, a swath of land—a block wide—was reserved on the south, east, and north, while to the west a larger area of land was set aside to form an annular commons. The commons enclosed the grid of thirty-six blocks and separated it from the undeveloped areas beyond.

By the period of the Civil War and with the rapid growth of both Allegheny and its burgeoning industrial activities, the notion of an unkempt common space in the heart of the city seemed both anachronistic and crude. In 1867, the city's government reviewed park developments in other American cities and invited five firms to submit proposals for the conversion of the common (in local parlance always referred to in the plural) into a

*Development Plan for North Side Commons,
by landscape architect, Ralph Griswold, c. 1930s.
Map: City of Pittsburgh Planning Commission.*





*Monument Hill memorial, juxtaposed against the 1966 Simonds & Simonds redesigned Lake Elizabeth.
Photo Charles Birnbaum*

designed landscape. The proposal of the New York firm of Mitchell and Grant was chosen and implementation went forward at a brisk pace. A copy of their site plan exists and allows us not only to understand what was created during the decade or so following 1867, but also to perceive how much of their design has survived. Miraculously, the strong imprint of their vision can still be seen today. Further testimony to the legacy of landscape architectural design that followed over the next century is how well it co-exists in harmony with the 1930s overlays by landscape architect Ralph Griswold and the “invisible” 1960s, Simonds & Simonds designs for the Aviary and Lake Elizabeth area.

Design Evolution--Change and Continuity

For the original Mitchell & Grant design, three linear park strips were designed in a highly formal configuration of symmetrically disposed pathway, punctuated in short order by monuments and particularly grandiose fountains; these latter attractions have long since disappeared. The impression, when the park was new, looked like a conflation of Boston's Public Garden and Commonwealth Avenue, with a touch of Versailles.

For the large and less rigorously bound West Common, which initially embraced a small isolated hill in its southwest corner, Mitchell and Grant adopted a loosely naturalistic style. Several small bodies of water are indicated in the early plan, shortly later these

coalesced into Lake Elizabeth, a charming large pond well documented in photographs around 1900. The Allegheny Commons Park enjoyed fairly substantial documentation, often in the form of picture postcards; there exists a rather detailed image of a flourishing Victorian small urban park at the peak of its maturity, some thirty or more years after its construction.

Changes had early on begun to alter the design vision of the 1860s. Lake Elizabeth was regularized and given a concrete basin and coping in the early twentieth century when it also acquired a boat house that converted the Lake from an object of contemplation to an object of recreations—boating in the summer and ice skating in the winter. The Lake disappeared altogether in the period of the Second World War and was reconceived as part of an uncompleted master plan done in the 1960s by Simonds and Simonds that called for the redesign of the Park. That lake and its accompanying altered terrain and furnishings remain in place now.

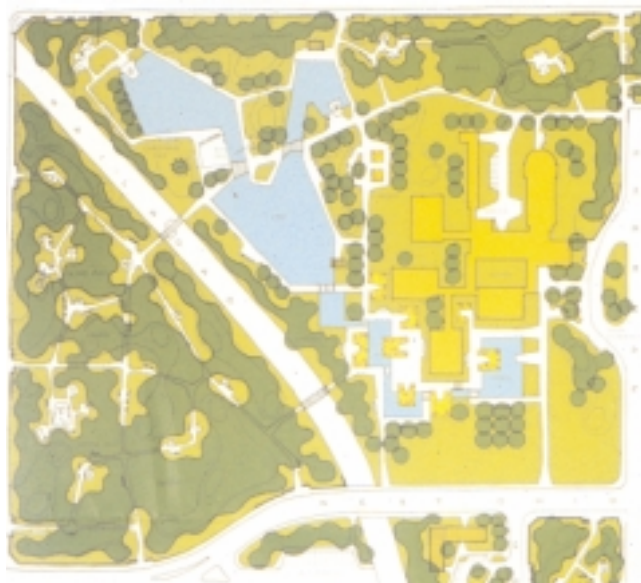
In the late 1930s, the Parks Department undertook a substantial reworking of portions of the Park, introducing a half-size basketball court, a swimming pool, a playground, and an

outdoor stage in the southernmost portion of the East Common. These features constitute the most noticeable recreational features, but form only a portion of such innovations introduced over a number of decades to respond to changing demands on this public space. Over the same long period, the South Common has virtually disappeared under expanded street development and commercial building.

Even before the Park's creation out of the existing commons system, a portion of West Park already contained a large penitentiary building. On its disappearance in the late nineteenth century, its site was occupied by the Conservatory given to the City of Allegheny by Henry Phipps, a forerunner of the even grander complex of glass houses he gave to Pittsburgh in 1893. His gift to Allegheny was eventually destroyed by an explosion, and in 1950 its location became the home of the National Aviary. The program for significant expansion of this facility into the landscape of West Park has raised concern among neighboring residents; and one of the challenges in formulating a master

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*Section of Simonds & Simonds design for Lake Elizabeth area, c. 1966.
From: "Allegheny Commons: A Proposed Long Range Development Plan."*





*Representatives of Northside Leadership Conference and the HLI coordinator discuss issues on site.
Photo Charles Birnbaum.*

Bringing Back a Nationally Significant City Park

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plan for the entire Park has been the reconciliation of the Aviary's need to grow with the necessity of preserving the limited character-defining open spaces and visual relationships within the Park.

Research Findings Builds Community Support and Interest

It is this visual record of the Commons, augmented by the recent rediscovery of the original plan and a quantity of recorded plant orders from the 1870s, that has launched the effort by Pittsburgh's Northside Leadership Conference to re-establish the Park's historical appearance. It was at this early junction that the enthusiastic group brought in the HLI Coordinator. During these initial visits the HLI Coordinator assisted with defining and articulating a research and planning strategy, suggested possible consultants and helped residents and stewards to think about the planning process in a way that was sympathetic with the park's continuum. Prior to this visit, it was only the 19th century historic resources that had captured the imaginations of locals.

Parallel with these discoveries and armed with the guidance offered by the HLI, a committee was formed with membership representing a number of groups, stakeholders and representatives from the local distinct neighborhoods. This resulted in a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and Request for Proposals (RFP) which were issued in 2000. Interviews of four finalists lead to the hiring

of Pressley Associates of Cambridge to produce a master plan for the Park's rehabilitation and for its management and maintenance needs.

Preservation Planning

In spite of how much has survived of the Park's original character, the problems confronting the master planning team have not been inconsiderable. There are the inevitable problems of deterioration brought on by insufficient maintenance and by public works interventions undertaken in ignorance or indifference in regard to the original conditions.

As is true everywhere, use patterns have changed, although passive recreation is still seen by the Park's neighbors as its greatest attractiveness. In the series of public meetings that has been central to the master planning process, citizens have consistently put improved maintenance and greater security at the top of their wish list. Strong enforcement of existing park regulations and the creation of a cadre of park rangers have also been frequently voiced requests.

The initial wish to recover as much of the Victorian Park as possible has remained uppermost in the thinking of the master planning consultants; however, they have also addressed the Park as a continuum of design interventions and changed patterns of use. The master plan, now in its final draft phase, makes proposals that aim to preserve much of the significant forms and features of the original Park design, while accepting and rehabilitating the surviving additions of the 1930's and the 1960s. In addition, the concentration of recreational facilities in the Park's southeast corner would be rehabilitat-

ed and the unused tennis courts (there are very popular courts in West Park) would be altered to create a full size basketball court. The lost South Common area will be evoked by newly planted trees along the existing streets, thus creating a green connection between the West and East Commons and reestablishing the original annular design of the Commons and the Park.

New amenities, compatible with historic contexts, are planned, and the aspirations of the Aviary are to be met by a series of features that take their inspiration from lost historical elements. Chief of these new features would be a boathouse lying along the side of Lake Elizabeth closest to the Aviary, on the approximate site of the boathouse of a hundred years ago. This new structure would house a badly needed café for Aviary and Park visitors, a rangers station, and facilities for reintroducing boating and ice skating on the Lake. The hope of restoring at least one of the great fountain elements, a significant feature of the Victorian era, is raised while the revival of Victorian carpet bedding has also been endorsed.

At the current time the master plan waits for a final round of public meetings and committee deliberations. All are excited about the prospect of bringing back to life this vital park that will provide open space for this underserved community. From the National perspective, the HLI Coordinator was most excited about the changing perceptions that this project brought about within the community. What was originally thought of as a fading Victorian park was actually a textbook of one hundred years of landscape architecture. This partnership truly altered the planning process and treatment recommendations that followed. In sum, the partnership with the HLI helped to reveal and educate the importance of the "invisible" design elements from the recent past that can now take their place along side of the better understood picturesque ancestors.

For more information, contact the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation at 412.471.6808 or www.phlf.org.

Innovative Program Undertaken by Minnesota Department of Transportation Documents and Evaluates Historic Roadside Landscape Features

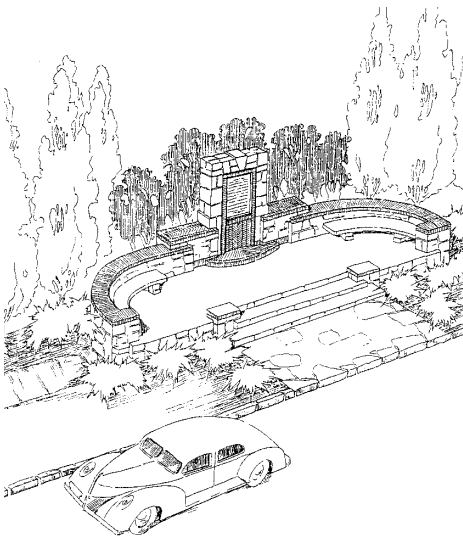
Rolf Anderson
Historian
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Today's traveler has come to expect our highway system to provide safe well-constructed roads and various amenities for the visitor. But in the early days of automobile travel, highways were poor and often simply the shortest distance between two points with little concern for the existing terrain and environment. Public facilities for travelers were nearly non-existent.

It was not until the 1920s that the modern theory of highway design began to emerge. Not only was roadway safety emphasized through sound engineering, but also the principles of landscape architecture were employed to minimize the impact of the built environment and to aesthetically enhance roadside landscapes. One important aspect of this new practice of highway design was the inclusion of roadside development facilities. These character-defining landscape features include waysides and scenic overlooks, picnic tables and fireplaces, historical markers, and various other structures designed to increase the recreational qualities and enjoyment of highway travel while providing safe places for drivers to rest.

The Study

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) recently completed an extensive study of roadside devel-



opment structures and landscape features under its jurisdiction. Its primary purpose was to compile a complete inventory of state-owned roadside structures, study the historical forces that led to their construction, and determine the importance of these sites, particularly in terms of their eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Mn/DOT contracted with the historical consulting firm of Gemini Research to conduct the study.

Archival material concerning roadside structures was reviewed, hundreds of architectural drawings were studied, and extensive fieldwork was conducted. Ultimately, 102 sites that contain roadside development structures built prior to 1961 were identified throughout the state. Remarkably, these sites contain hundreds of standing structures and/or landscape features including shelters, restrooms, bathhouses, bridges, council rings, retaining walls, dams, and even sea walls and rock gardens. In all, 43 separate types of features were identified. Some of the properties consist of simply a monument, while many are well-developed parks with trail systems

Perspective drawing of the Pine Bend Historic Marker drawn in 1939 by landscape architect, A. R. Nichols. Its detailing and landscaping are representative of the finely-executed designs from the period. The marker was constructed by the New Deal's National Youth Administration in 1939-40. Courtesy Mn/DOT.



The Preston Overlook, built in 1937, is typical of the craftsmanship from the era. Its articulated stone wall, stone curbed parking area and picnic table were designed to provide safe viewing areas for the driving public. Courtesy Mn/DOT.

and several use areas that incorporate sophisticated designs and landscaping.

Historic Themes

The historic forces that created Minnesota's roadside development were also studied. Because the landscape features were constructed over a period of more than 70 years, an understanding of these themes was particularly important for developing guidelines to determine which sites were historically important. The features range in age from Camp Release State Memorial Wayside built in 1894 to the waysides of the post-World War II era. One of the most significant findings was that the majority of the inventoried properties were built in the 1930s and early 1940s as a result of the federal relief programs of President Roosevelt's New Deal.

The New Deal Period

The Minnesota Department of Highways, as Mn/DOT was known at the time, was an enthusiastic recipient of the unprecedented federal funding and tremendous manpower offered by New Deal

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Historic Roadside Landscape Features Survey

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programs such as the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the Works Progress Administration (WPA), and the National Youth Administration (NYA). In a few short years the department was able to fulfill many of the goals of its newly created Roadside Development Division by building an extensive collection of roadside facilities throughout Minnesota.

Roadside landscape features were usually built independently along well-traveled routes or in conjunction with state trunk highway system construction projects. On popular tourist routes, an entire series of waysides, overlooks, and other landscape features was sometimes built, such as those found on the North Shore of Lake Superior or along the St. Croix and Mississippi Rivers. Roadside development features would sometimes supplement the facilities provided by state parks. Many overlooks were built to allow travelers to safely experience particularly scenic or dramatic views.

NPS Rustic Style

While several New Deal programs furnished the manpower to construct many of the state's roadside features, it was the National Park Service that was responsible for their strong visual images. The NPS offered technical assistance to help states build their state park systems as well as roadside facilities. Along with the assistance came one of the

"The survey and report is one of the most comprehensive investigations of historical resources managed by the Minnesota Department of Transportation. It provides in-depth documentation on the origins of the roadside development program and its examination of the many roadside structures and their distinctive character defining features provides the Preservation Office and Mn/DOT with the documentation necessary to determine their historical significance."

Susan Roth, National Register Historian, Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office

most enduring legacies of the Park Service, a design philosophy that we now call the NPS Rustic Style. This philosophy was based on the concept that a man-made structure is always an intrusion on the natural landscape, but its impact could be limited through the use of careful massing and native materials, such as log or stone, that would harmonize with the environment.

In Minnesota the result was an incredible variety of roadside development structures built with materials that include deeply-hued granite, warm limestone, colorful fieldstone, and even log construction, depending on locally available materials. Construction was finely-crafted and labor-intensive, methods generally too costly to recreate today. Most

importantly, the structures seem to emerge from the natural landscape and appear in harmony with their landscape surrounds.

The Report and Its Findings

Once Mn/DOT's inventory was complete and the historic themes identified, criteria were developed in order to assess the significance of each roadside development site. After the criteria were applied, it was determined that 51 sites, as well as one historic district, were eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The project's final report, *Historic Roadside Development Structures on Minnesota Trunk Highways*, (for ordering information see The Last Word, page 16) provided Mn/DOT with a much better understanding of the properties under its jurisdiction. Moreover, it allowed the department to consider the roadside sites as a single collection of uniquely significant properties rather than as unrelated structures.

Report as a Planning Tool

Moreover, the report has set the stage for additional historic preservation planning and documentation studies. Mn/DOT is not only interested in recognizing the historical significance of its roadside sites, but also intends to create practical planning documents to aid in managing these properties. Many of these sites are in need of repair, plus continual highway expansion places development pressures on roadside structures. A small wayside built to provide for the rather modest traffic of the 1930s may not be adequate to safely accommodate today's heavier demands unless planning is done now.

All the sites determined eligible for the National Register are being assessed in greater detail. Gemini Research and consulting architects are working with Mn/DOT to prepare a Treatment Plan for each site. These reports will include detailed information about each site's spatial organization and land patterns; topography; vegetation; circulation; structures, furnishings, and objects; and accessibility considerations. Also included are

The overlook at Garrison is one of the state's most popular waysides. This landmark site features an immense concourse resembling a fort projecting into the waters of Lake Mille Lacs. It was built on dry land by the CCC during the drought years of the Great Depression with the expectation that the lake would return to its normal level.

Courtesy Mn/DOT.



cost estimates that compare stabilization, preservation, and restoration for each site.

Mn/DOT is preparing National Register nominations for several sites and also exploring the creation of a conservation zone that encompasses both the National Register-eligible property and related adjacent areas. The conservation zone is designed to preserve the physical and visual setting of each site and help buffer it from elements that may detract from its historic character.

Comprehensive Management Plan and Streamlined Review

Ultimately, Mn/DOT plans to rehabilitate or restore many of the most significant sites and to prepare a comprehensive management plan that will guide the treatment of each of the state's roadside development features for years to come.

The management plan will assist Mn/DOT's district offices, which are responsible for the day-to-day operation and long-term care of the roadside properties.

This unique stone "beehive" contains cook stoves for picnickers. It represents one of the many highway and roadside improvements built by the WPA for Highway 100 west of Minneapolis. Because of the intense modern-day traffic flow, several of the waysides are now stranded and inaccessible. Courtesy Mn/DOT.



Understanding the importance and comparative significance of roadside development features will help guide planning decisions and allow time to obtain necessary funding. In addition, guidelines will be provided for the proper treatment of historic roadside features and for cyclical maintenance. Moreover, these guidelines should prevent the adverse treatment of roadside structures that has inadvertently occurred in the past. They may also facilitate the preservation of roadside features that are not eligible for the National Register but are still considered worthy of preservation.

Another goal of the planning process is to create a programmatic agreement between Mn/DOT and its various partner agencies such as the Federal Highway Administration and the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office. Currently, when these agencies review a Mn/DOT project (usually as required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act), it is handled individually on a case-by-case basis that is often costly and time-consuming. Once the programmatic agreement is in place, reviews will be streamlined since all parties will have already agreed upon the properties' significance as well as appropriate options and treatment methods.

Minnesota Transportation Legacy

Minnesota's roadside development structures and landscape features are historic reminders of the emergence of our modern highway system and its early focus on environmentally sensitive design. Those built by the New Deal programs share an association with the unprecedented federal response to the Great Depression and reflect the unique architectural and landscape architectural philosophy of the National Park Service. Moreover, many of the state-owned roadside landscape features are still in use and appreciated to this day. Some, because of size and location, have become landmarks. The on-going efforts of the Minnesota Department of Transportation on behalf of these remarkable resources will not only facilitate their long-term preservation but will also continue to enhance the experience of the traveling public.

For more information, contact: Liz Walton, Minnesota Department of Transportation, Site Development Unit, MS 686, 395 John Ireland Boulevard, St. Paul, MN 55155, phone 651.296.0295, e-mail liz.walton@dot.state.mn.us.

For additional information about the treatment and management of historic roads, see:

Carr, Ethan. *Wilderness by Design: Landscape Architecture and the National Park Service*. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1998. A compilation of case studies highlighting the accomplishments of the landscape architects of the National Park Service and documenting their contributions to American landscape history. From the perspective of the growing movement for regional planning in America, a chapter documents the role of Vint and his staff in coordinating a master plan and designing facilities for Mount Rainier National Park.

Granger, Susan, Scott Kelly and Kay Grossman. Gemini Research. *Historic Roadside Development Structures on Minnesota Truck Highways*. Minnesota Department of Transportation, December 1998. Cultural resource study whose goal was to inventory all roadside development properties on current Mn/DOT right-of-way that contain pre-1961 standing structures and to evaluate National Register eligibility.

Hubbard, Henry V. "Landscape Development Based on Conservation." *Landscape Architecture* 29(3):105-121. Hubbard's article provides a comprehensive view of the work of the National Park Service's Branch of Planning headed by Vint and the process of planning and construction that Vint had spearheaded since the late 1920s.

McClelland, Linda Flint. *Building the National Parks: Historic Landscape Design and Construction*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998. History of the policies, principles, and practices of landscape design that guided the development and protection of the national parks from the founding of the National Park Service to the end of the 20th century. Several chapters trace the leading role Vint played in shaping the design services and planning process for national park development from 1928 to 1961.

Kentucky Streetscape Design Guidelines for Historic Commercial Districts

Editor's Note:

Much progress has been made in revitalizing America's Main Streets and streetscapes over the past several decades, with some important reservations, as noted here. In recent years many of our downtown areas have been cleaned up and embellished with Victorian-inspired furnishings, festival banners and street trees. In addition, unsightly utilities have been buried and public art and ornamental paving have been introduced. In these streetscape "revitalization" projects, a quest for authenticity has not been the norm.

Let us place this quest for "authenticity" in the context of the emerging field of landscape preservation. At first glance it appears that present-day preservation planning and treatment for historic streetscapes has not yet achieved the same level of "honesty" that is being applied to the rehabilitation and continued use of our city's commercial buildings. Those inappropriate streetscape "embellishments" are more akin to new shopping malls than historic settings, and pay no tribute to real history.

In response to this philosophical disconnect, the HLI is pleased to highlight the recent project by the Kentucky Heritage Council, the Kentucky Streetscape Design Guidelines for Historic Commercial Districts as a pioneering effort in bringing authenticity to a cultural landscape that is often part of our everyday lives.

Last, it seems appropriate to present this essay in the context of the Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes. Both efforts promote project work that "does not give a false sense of history" and both recognize (within the Standards for Rehabilitation) that it is possible for contemporary design to be "in synch" with the past. We hope that this collaborative project in Kentucky inspires other such efforts across the country.

Ned Crankshaw
Landscape Architecture Department
University of Kentucky

The *Kentucky Streetscape Design Guidelines for Historic Commercial Districts* are a co-operative effort of the Kentucky Heritage Council (Kentucky's statewide preservation office), the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, and the Renaissance Kentucky Alliance. The Alliance is a consortium of four state agencies including the Kentucky Housing Department, League of Cities, Department for Local Government and the Heritage Council. The purpose of this study is to revitalize the economies of participating towns and cities. Under the authorship of a

landscape architect, the *Streetscape Design Guidelines* were written in consultation with the Kentucky Heritage Council, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, and others.

Renaissance Kentucky directs a large portion of Kentucky's Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) enhancement funding to downtown projects. The defined "Renaissance" areas in towns that receive project funding are, by nature, historic areas, and most of them are National Register Districts. The *Guidelines'* goal is to ensure that streetscape and other landscape improvement projects using this funding follow appropriate historic preservation, safety, and accessibility standards. In essence they apply *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards*



Main Street, Louisville, KY. These photos taken nearly ten years apart show a new Main Street complete with street trees, ornamental tree grates, tree guards, benches, trash receptacles, public art, interpretive objects, signage and brick sidewalks. Also note the removal of diagonal parking and above ground utility poles. This alteration alters the visual and spatial relationships of this vernacular landscape -in sum this industrial landscape has lost its authentic character-defining features in place of new furnishings and objects which are fanciful and appear old. In addition, the visual connection to the Ohio River will ultimately be lost when trees mature over time. It is these situations that the Kentucky Streetscape Design Guidelines for Historic Commercial Districts, aims to remedy. Photos (1990 and 2000) Charles Birnbaum.

for the *Treatment of Historic Properties* to the specific issues of commercial districts. The *Guidelines* are also infused with an approach toward downtown design that emphasizes functional improvement over concepts of “beautification.” These two ideas, formal authenticity and functional improvement, underlie all recommendations in the *Guidelines*. In all cases, the new work aligns with the *Secretary’s Standards* in that the new work is distinguishable and does not create a “false sense of history” using pastiche elements from an earlier era.

Historic commercial districts are more than a collection of historic buildings; they are historic vernacular landscapes. The relationship of buildings to streets and the punctuation of streets by other public spaces is a spatial and visual system that distinguishes them from the other sections of their towns. The design of streets and other public spaces in these districts should be treated as historic preservation work, utilizing the *Standards for Rehabilitation*. However, it is often hindered by two issues worth noting: a lack of understanding of historic preservation principles by local officials and consulting design professionals, and the demands of contemporary transportation infrastructure.

Public Attitudes to Main Street and Streetscapes

Observation of many “downtown revitalization” projects and discussions with their consultants make it clear that a significant proportion of the designers working on historic commercial district projects do not understand (or believe in) the basic preservation planning and treatment *Guidelines* offered by the Secretary of the Interior. Some are simply not interested in the idea of historic preservation. Others actually think they are undertaking historic preservation work when they are not, because of poor understanding of the application of preservation standards to commercial districts.

The desire to unify disparate downtown areas and buildings is a motivating force for much work that is counter to preservation philosophy and practice. Efforts to create unity lead to the destruction of those character-defining features that do not conform to the chosen design theme. The *Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* recommend research, documentation, and retention of all historic features and materials.



Most gazebos and other historically-derived structures have limited utility in downtown parks.

These features also create a false sense of history.

Photo Ned Crankshaw.

The Benefits of Research

Research and documentation of historic downtown landscapes is not particularly difficult. Americans have taken an extraordinary quantity of photographs of commercial districts and the public activities that take place in them. Locally available photographs, postcards, aerial views, drawings, and written and oral descriptions are usually available and can be dated, organized, and analyzed to develop a spatial understanding of downtown change. Documentation of design configurations, specific elements such as light fixtures, dimensions of widths and areas, and placement of elements are all important to creating a thorough background for preservation design.

Coordinating a Historic Preservation & Design Response

Beyond the burden of research, designers are reluctant to salvage old materials. Extant character-defining features and materials may be from various time periods and may vary from location to location in a district, creating a complicated array of conditions. They are rarely in perfect condition, for example—light standards may be rusty, and stone curbs may be spalled and require repair. Directing the repair of specific elements and designing construction details for the re-use of a variety of materials is a complicated management and design process for most design and engineering consultants. The unfortunate perception is that it is simply easier to tear out, throw away, and start over. Even with the *Kentucky Streetscape Design Guidelines for Historic Commercial Districts* in place, retention of historic features and

materials--the most basic of preservation ideas--has to date, been the issue involving the most compromise in Renaissance communities.

What might be called “nodalism” is another prevailing design idea with a strong impact on commercial district preservation. As Richard Francaviglia says in *Main Street Revisited*, “...when Main Streets are revitalized, they are often redesigned through a process that de-emphasizes their linearity and emphasizes (often enhances) their nodality.” Nodalism can have a negative impact when it is applied by creating a series of landscape “events” along streets. This becomes intrusive because it dilutes the spatial order of street and building assemblies. The *Streetscape Guidelines* channel the desire for individualized landscapes into the preservation of historic spaces, visual and spatial relationships such as courthouse squares, and into areas where historic use and fabric are absent, such as the “greyfield” areas that are a part of most commercial districts. Greyfields are those areas, usually at the edge of a downtown, whose uses are dominated by parking lots and commercial enterprises that require large proportions of on-site parking, drive-through lanes, or service areas. They often occupy areas that were historically transitions zones between residential neighborhoods and commercial districts.

Commercial districts are also different from many other types of historic landscapes because they have intensive infrastructure demands. The need to devote space to auto-

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mobile circulation and parking needs is particularly pervasive. Downtown districts have spent long periods coping with the need to accommodate many automobiles in environments not originally designed for them, while competing with commercial environments built for automobile users. The *Streetscape Guidelines* recognize this and emphasize the need for a functional response to daily activity. One treatment recommendation for example is to analyze pedestrian links between parking areas and destinations and to target accessibility or other necessary improvements to those pathways. Another recommendation is to analyze existing parking areas and vacant spaces for effective use and to preserve on-street parking, because parking lot construction is a primary cause of building demolition.

Ideas of functionalism, authenticity, and recognition of change over time intersect in debates over contemporary elements and materials. Many town officials and board members have had little exposure to contemporary street elements. They often believe that new features and materials detracted from historic environments. For example, Cobra head lights scaled for highways and franchise commercial buildings have been the kinds of contemporary elements that, in their experience, have been inserted into historic commercial

Street trees and other plantings were a historic part of many commercial centers, but usually were restricted to particular buildings or spaces.
Photo Ned Crankshaw.



Period furnishings create a false emphasis on one favored time period. Photo Ned Crankshaw.

districts. The counter reaction to poor contemporary intrusions has been clichéd 'period style' design in so many projects that it has become an accepted, and unfortunate, standard. In this work, not only is the end result a false sense of history, unique regional expressions and identities can be lost or compromised and a region's distinct resources can begin to look homogenized.

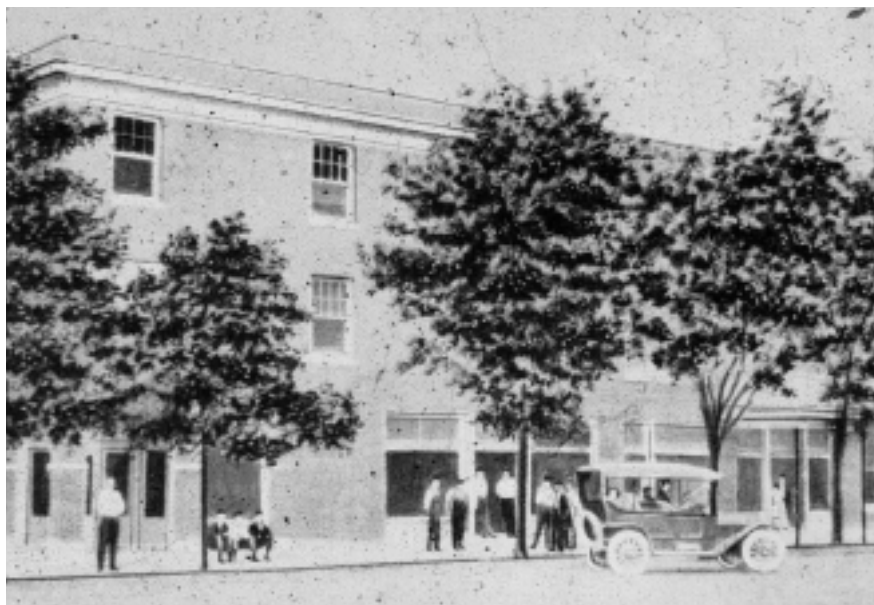
The *Guidelines* direct the choice of lights, benches, or other elements to clearly contemporary selections when historic models are inappropriate. Historic models are inappropriate when they cannot be accurately documented, cannot be authentically duplicated, or when elements are being placed in areas where they historically did not exist. An example of this is in new parking lots, where contemporary lights should be used.

Measuring Success

Though the educational effort in regard to contemporary design is ongoing and sometimes challenging, many decision-makers are pleased to be freed of the perceived burden to "beautify" downtown. Many have expressed that they felt they were expected to install elaborate pavement patterns, to plant rows of street trees on the main commercial streets, and to install period light fixtures. The *Streetscape Guidelines* have encouraged them to give greater attention to meaningful design issues like parking lots, infill projects, and accessibility improvements.

The *Streetscape Guidelines* are presented in a written document that is heavily illustrated with examples. They have been widely distributed in Kentucky Main Street Program and Renaissance Kentucky participant communities. The Heritage Council and Transportation Cabinet have held training sessions with local officials, board members, and program managers. Landscape architects, architects, and engineers attended separate sessions for consultants.

The Renaissance application process obliges any community receiving funding to follow the *Guidelines*. The Heritage council ensures compliance with pre and post construction review of projects. The 80% funding level for projects is a motivation to work within the historic preservation framework of the *Streetscape Guidelines*, and the reimbursement structure of Renaissance funding gives teeth to the review process. As in most preservation projects, however, standards and *Guidelines* must be interpreted. Coming to agreement can be time-consuming and at times, difficult.



Resistance to the *Streetscape Guidelines* has come not from communities, but from some of the consulting design professionals. The perception that the *Guidelines* limit their design responses and restrict their ability to radically change the appearance of downtown districts is accurate. The degree to which this is viewed as unfair intrusion into the client-consultant decision making relationship depends on the preservation experience of a firm. The point where designers and communities both chafe at the *Guidelines* is where historically authentic elements may cost more than standard period-style fixtures. An example of this situation is a light fixture that may no longer be in production and whose manufacture requires custom machining or casting. The lower costs that come from dispensing with over-detailed pavements and other superfluous improvements help to achieve financial balance that allows projects to meet objectives.

The *Guidelines* were recently awarded an "excellence award" from AASHTO (American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials) for Renaissance Kentucky as an entire program. For more information on the award see the website: www.teachallenge.org. Now in its revised second edition, the *Guidelines* may be obtained from the Kentucky Heritage Council. For ordering information consult, the Last Word on page 16.

Ned Crankshaw, ASLA, of the Landscape Architecture Department at the University of Kentucky, wrote the *Guidelines* in consultation with the Kentucky Heritage Council, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, and others.

To obtain a copy of the *Kentucky Streetscape Design Guidelines for Historic Commercial Districts* contact the Kentucky Heritage Council, see The Last Word for details (page 16).

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Call for Papers

National Conference on the Preservation and Management of Historic Campus Grounds in Minneapolis in 2002

The National Park Service's Historic Landscape Initiative, the SHPO of the Minnesota Historical Society, the University of Minnesota and the Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum are co-sponsoring a national conference on the preservation and management of America's historic campus plans and universities. To be held on October 24-26, 2002 at the University of Minnesota at its Minneapolis Campus, the two day conference will be a celebration of the evolution of this historic designed landscape over time and will provide a framework for the ongoing preservation planning, treatment and management of historic campus grounds.

The second day of this conference is the subject of this Call for Papers. The conference sponsors are soliciting papers that highlight innovative project work that recognizes the myriad issues surrounding the care and management of historic campus plans.

Abstracts should be 500 words or less and should be submitted to: Coordinator, Historic Landscape Initiative, National Park Service, Heritage Preservation Services, 1849 C Street, NW (NC 320) Washington, DC 20240. Please include a current resume. Deadline for the receipt of abstracts is January 31, 2002. Applicants will be notified by



February 15. If you have any questions please contact the Historic Landscape Initiative at 202-343-9597.

We anticipate the papers selected to be national in scope, these will highlight:

- Research strategies, identification and documentation methodologies that illustrate a commitment to a landscape's evolution;
- Integration of new construction projects which specifically illustrate an understanding of the landscape's significant visual and spatial relationships;
- Innovations in public use and interpretation beyond traditional text and panel approaches;
- Integration of resource stewardship illustrating a collective management and maintenance approach, including such groups as the office of the architect/campus planner, facilities manager and schools of landscape, historic preservation, and architecture.



Images, above and left: University of Minnesota Campus. Location for the National Conference on the Preservation and Management of Historic Campus Grounds. Photos Charles Birnbaum.

Pittsburgh's Innovative and Evolving Partnership

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For more information about the preservation work of the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, contact them at 450 One Station Square, Pittsburgh, PA, 15219. Phone: 412.471.5808, fax: 412.471.1633. Hours: Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm excluding holidays. They maintain a very informative website at www.phlf.org.

Minnesota DOT's Historic Roadside Landscape Features

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To obtain more information or a copy of the survey, *Historic Roadside Development Structures on Minnesota Trunk Highways*, please contact Liz Walton at Minnesota Department of Transportation, Site Development Unit, MS 686, 395 John Ireland Boulevard, St. Paul, MN, 55155. Phone: 651.296.0295, e-mail liz.walton@dot.state.mn.us. In the near future the survey, in its entirety, will be posted on their website at www.dot.state.mn.us/.

Kentucky Streetscape Design Guidelines

The 40-page document, *Kentucky Streetscape Design Guidelines for Historic Commercial Districts*, is available from the Kentucky Heritage Council, 300 Washington Street, Frankfort, KY, 40601. Phone 502.564.7005.

Purchase "Making Educated Decisions"

Making Educated Decisions: A Landscape Preservation Bibliography. Edited by Charles A. Birnbaum, FASLA, and Heather Barrett. A valuable resource to anyone involved with preservation planning and stewardship of significant landscapes. 667 annotated citations from 48 American states and 27 countries. 170 pages. 30 illustrations. 2000. GPO stock number: 024-005-01206-1. To order, call 202-512-1800. \$12.00 per copy.

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